



The IGUANA

Volume 16, No. 15

July 23, 2004



Surgical mission reaches locals

Pages 4, 5

Safe sex deception

By Sgt. Jorge Gomez
Editor

Service members are frequently advised, "if you are going to have sex, practice safe sex." But this "safe sex" tag may mislead them to think that using a condom is risk-free. The hard reality is that the effectiveness of a condom is reduced by a number of factors and circumstances.

Planned Parenthood reports on its Web site that of 100 women whose partners use condoms, about 15 will become pregnant during the first year of typical use and only two women will become pregnant with perfect use.

Perhaps some may consider those rates to be fairly good in preventing pregnancy, but it should alarm service members when they consider that a woman can get pregnant only about six days per month. HIV can infect people every day of the month. And it is unrealistic to expect an intoxicated individual to perfectly use a condom.

Studies by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the AIDS virus does not pass through the latex condom.

The problem does not lie in the latex itself. The problem lies in the fragility of the condom – a reality that is rarely emphasized.

For example, the Web site of the University of Alabama in Canada cites a study conducted by the European Centre for the Epidemiological Monitoring of AIDS to prove the effectiveness of the condom.

The ECEM studied 250 couples in which one partner was HIV infected. It found that among the 125 couples who used condoms correctly and consistently, not one uninfected partner became infected.

In demonstrating how condoms can prevent infection, it also demonstrated how people can easily fail to use them correctly. Half of the couples couldn't get it right all the time and now they are walking corpses because of their misplaced confidence.

How much confidence can service members place in a condom when 125 documented couples out of 250 failed to properly use them. Isn't it misleading to think that a condom will provide "safe sex"?

Service members who choose to be sexually active must realize that using condoms does not guarantee protection.

There is no "safe sex."

Chaplain's corner

The Balanced Being

By Chaplain (Capt.) Rory Rodriguez
JTF-B command chaplain

In my last article, I presented the biblical presentation of man's nature being comprised of a trinity: spirit, soul and body.

By the way, God has left his own imprint in this universe. (The number three is throughout his creation). So quite naturally man is composed of three distinct parts.

The problem of mankind

"Why is this important," you may be asking. It is of primary importance because if man doesn't understand what he is, how in the world is he going to solve his problems in this world in which he struggles?

You see the big problem is that man does not know what to do with himself. This is because he is ignorant on WHAT he is. He has no idea who he is, where he came from and where he is going.

If there is no written final authority (a divine revelation) that details man's origin and make-up, then man is destined toward frustration and failure.

It is both critical and vital to know who we are, where we came from and where we are headed. Without this knowledge, we are a lost ball in high weeds. Without this knowledge, the best then that we can do is self-propagation, self-preservation and self-gratification. Now if that is all there is to life ... then no thanks.

That makes me no different than an animal. I grant you that man can sometimes behave like an animal (in a crude sense) but an animal cannot act like a man. Now of course with television and imagination and special effects anything is possible. The exception only proves the rule.

I gave up long ago that man can fix the mess he has put himself in. Personally speaking, my hope, trust and faith is not in corruptible flesh (man) but in God, the incorruptible Spirit. The problem with man, according to the Holy Bible, is that man is a fallen creature; man is a sinner and in need of redemption; man needs to be delivered from sin and self ... that's the bottom line.

The Remedy of Mankind

Therefore, man cannot save himself. History proves this beyond the shadow of doubt. Man tries, tries and tries but he will always fail, fail and fail. Man tries to bring in the utopia, the "garden of Eden"; instead he ends up with the "weeds of Alan" (I made that one up – but you get my point).

According to the Bible, God is willing and able to forgive man and to impart his own life in his soul. The only remedy for man, according to the Holy Bible, is for man to have a proper relationship with his Creator. The remedy for man is a new heart – a heart that responds to God; a heart that enjoys God; a heart that gives himself to others for the glory of God.

Dear reader, my prayer is that you think about this and personally apply it to your own life. Are you satisfied with your life? Do you find yourself without meaning, purpose and direction? Do you feel like you are meant for more in this life? Do you feel like you are surviving in this world instead of living? Are you willing to allow God to give you his life infused into your soul? Are you willing to trust God? I pray that you do.

I leave you with these words from Jesus Christ, "what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul"?

The IGUANA

EDITORIAL STAFF

JTF-Bravo Commander
Col. Richard Bassett

Public Affairs Director
1st Lt. Anna Siegel

Superintendent
Tech. Sgt. Roel Utley

Editor
Sgt. Jorge Gomez

Photo Technician
Martin Chahin

E-mail:

PUBLICAFFAIRSOFFICE@jtfb.southcom.mil
Web site: <http://www.southcom.mil/home/jtfbravo>

This funded, joint U.S. Air Force/Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas. Contents of The Iguana do not necessarily reflect the official view of, and are not endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense or the departments of the Air Force or Army.

Content is edited, prepared and provided by the Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs Office, APO AA 34042, in Building D-06. Telephone numbers are 011-504-234-4634, ext. 4150 or 4676. Fax is ext. 4550. or DSN 449-4150/4676. Readers with story ideas should call the Public Affairs office. All photographs are property of JTF-Bravo unless otherwise noted.

PRINTED BY PUBLYNLSA

SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to The Iguana should be sent to the PAO at jorge.gomez@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. D-06. If you have questions about possible submissions call ext. 4150 or 4676 to talk to the editor.



on the cover

Maj. (Dr.) Edward Falta (right), Medical Element general surgeon assists Dr. Jose Mejia, Sta. Teresa Hospital surgeon in Comayagua. Falta and Mejia remove the tonsils of a Honduran patient. Photo by Sgt. Jorge Gomez. For story and more photos, see Pages 4 and 5.

July 23, 2004

News

The IGUANA 3

JTF-Bravo welcomes new commander



Photo by Martin Chahin

By Sgt. Jorge Gomez
Editor

Col. William Phelps relinquished command of Joint Task Force-Bravo to Col. Richard Bassett during a change-of-command ceremony July 15 here.

Gen. James T. Hill, U.S. Southern Command commander, said Bassett is an outstanding leader who brings a diverse background to the command.

"I have confidence in his leadership to respond to the challenges of JTF-Bravo," Hill said.

To the new commander, Hill said, "You have America's finest working here and many opportunities for success; take this great unit and make it even better."

As the commander of JTF-Bravo, Bassett said, "I will dedicate all my time and energy to you and our collective efforts to continue to fulfill our mission to the highest standards."

Prior to his command at JTF-Bravo, Bassett served as staff officer at the battalion, brigade, division and corps level.

His assignments include the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the 25th Infantry Division (Light), the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 508th Infantry in the Republic of Panama, the 75th Ranger Regiment, I Corps, and the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry).

He also served as an observer/controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Chaffee, Ark., and the National Training Center. The La Mirada, Calif., native graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., in 1982.

JTF-Bravo was activated Aug. 1984 to counter communist expansion in Central America during the latter stages of the Cold War, to deter Nicaraguan aggression and to provide command and control of U.S. military forces deployed to the region.

From 1992 to 1994, JTF-Bravo's mission refocused as bilateral humanitarian and civil assistance operations to help infrastructure development after the war.

On April 1996, U.S. SOUTHCOM republished operation order Central Champs, tasking JTF-Bravo to expand its Joint Operations Area to include Honduras, Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

In June 2002, Central Champs was again revised, adding Panama to the JOA. Working with the U.S. ambassadors and the U.S. military groups of the JOA, JTF-Bravo has significantly enhanced the readiness of deployed U.S. forces in the region, and has contributed to the continued social, economic and infrastructure development throughout Central America.



Photo by Sgt. Jorge Gomez

Honduran Gen. Jose Barahona, Honduran forces commander; Vice-minister Julio Perez, Honduran assistant secretary of defense; and U.S. ambassador Larry Palmer stand during the playing of the Armed Forces songs.

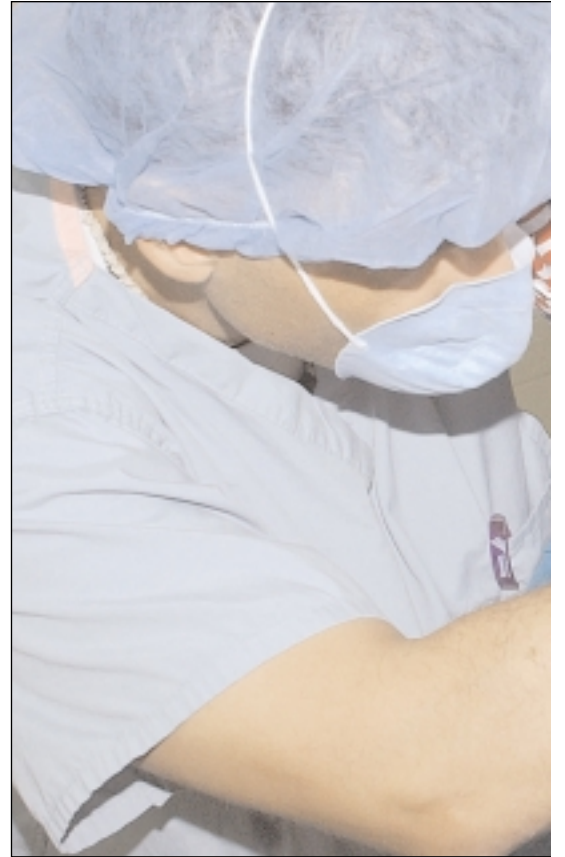


Photo by Martin Chahin

Gen. James T. Hill, U.S. Southern Command commander, passes the organizational colors to Col. Richard Bassett, Joint Task Force-Bravo incoming commander, during a change-of-command ceremony July 15.



For the first time, 1st Lt. Richelle Kaneshiro, emergency medical technician, sutured on a human being. Kaneshiro joined the MEDEL team that assists local Honduran hospital with surgeries.



Maj. (Dr.) Arthur Womble, anesthesiologist, patient at Regional Hospital Santa Teresa in

Army aid Ho

While the people of Honduras suffer from a lack of medical care due to an ongoing national strike of medical residents and 18,000 health workers, a small team from Medical Element packs their surgical instruments and avails itself to local hospitals.

On any given day, the team consisting of a surgeon, anesthesiologist and two operating room nurses will assist Honduran physicians in surgeries from hernia removals to gunshot wounds and severe burn operations.

"This team is an extraordinary help to us," said Dr. Jose Mejia, department head of surgery at Regional Hospital Santa Teresa in Comayagua. "We have been able to operate on twice as many patients and with greater safety measures since there are two surgeons working together."

Maj. (Dr.) Edward Falta, MEDEL general surgeon, said he understands how valuable it is to have an additional surgeon present during an operation.

"I know that working by myself on a



monitors 1st Lt. Gustavo Moreno, emergency medical technician, intubate a Honduran patient in Comayagua. Moreno's clinical experience took him beyond manikin training.

medics Hondurans

tough surgical problem is an awful situation to be in, and an extra pair of skilled hands across the table can be the greatest relief," Falta said.

Along with their expertise, the MEDEL team also brings \$200-worth of surgical supplies to the Honduran operating room at no cost to the hospital nor to the patient. Since the materials are disposable, it frees up the Hondurans from re-sterilizing their sheets and instruments, affording them time to do more operations.

Honduran patients are not the only ones who benefit. The surgical team learns to work together and to anticipate each part of an operation, Falta said.

"Like an orchestra, it has to practice repeatedly until such an economy of effort becomes an art," Falta said. "This is the greatest benefit for our effort, and subsequently for the Army."

The challenge for Maj. (Dr.) Arthur Womble, MEDEL anesthesiologist, is working without the monitoring technology that is standard for North American practice.

"It's teaching me to become sensitive to the patient's reflexes and to develop a 'sixth sense,'" Womble said. "This is good field experience because it is what would be expected of me in a combat situation."

The clinical experience gave 1st Lt. Richelle Kaneshiro, emergency medical technician, the opportunity to suture on a human being for the first time.

During the preoperative stage, Womble taught 1st Lt. Gustavo Moreno, another MEDEL EMT, how to perform an intubation.

"Intubating a real patient is the only way to know for sure how to do it," Moreno said. "We train with manikins and it's never the same."

Xiomara Machado, a Honduran anesthesiologist technician at Sta. Teresa, said she has learned from the exchange of ideas and techniques with Womble.

"I've observed how he does nasal intubations without administering muscle relaxants on children," Machado said. "These are new techniques and procedures that I can now apply."



Preparing a Honduran patient for anesthesia, 1st Lt. Gustavo Moreno, conducts a routine exercise – inserting an intravenous line.



Xiomara Machado, Honduran anesthesiologist technician, assists Maj. (Dr.) Arthur Womble, anesthesiologist, as he prepares a patient for surgery.

Story and photos
by Sgt. Jorge Gomez

Reap assumes 1-228th command

By Sgt. Jorge Gomez
Editor

Lt. Col. Mark Richardson relinquished command of the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment to Lt. Col. Vincent Reap during a ceremony July 8.

Col. William Phelps, Joint Task Force-Bravo (former) commander, chartered Reap, "take this great unit to even greater heights. Keep them ready, for deployment will surely come. And take care of the Soldiers as they will take care of you."

Reap, who is no stranger to Soto Cano Air Base, said "I once made Honduras my home a few years ago and it is great to be back to serve with the JTF-Bravo team."

The new commander's previous assignments include attack helicopter platoon leader, assistant battalion operations officer and battalion adjutant of the 2nd Bn. (Attack), 3rd Aviation Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, Giebelstadt, West Germany.

He served an exchange tour with the U.S. Marine Corps, with duty in the Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron - One, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz. He commanded Company D, 228th, here at SCAB and Co. A, 3rd Bn., 160 SOAR (A) Savannah, Ga. His most recent assignment was the ARSOA transformation officer for the 160th SOAR (A).

The 1-228th supports the U.S. Southern Command theater of operations in Central and South America.

Most missions involve counter-drug, humanitarian assistance and distinguished visitor air movement in support of JTF-Bravo.



Col. William Phelps, Joint Task Force-Bravo (former) commander, passes on the battalion colors to Lt. Col. Vincent Reap, 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment incoming commander July 8.



Officers from 1-228th usher in the change-of-command ceremony.



Soto Cano Air Base commanders and sergeants major render honors to the Honduran and United States national anthems during the 1-228th Aviation Regiment's change-of-command ceremony July 8.

Photos by Martin Chahin

July 23, 2004

Photo feature

The IGUANA 7



Senior Airman William McCoy, Joint Security Forces, searches for a victim through tall grass during a Search and Rescue training exercise at Soto Cano Air Base July 9.

Army, Air Force team up for SAR



At the direction of Capt. Michael Chambers (right), Senior Airman William McCoy and Spc. Curtis Frierson check for vital signs of the victim during a Search and Rescue training exercise.



Spc. Esmeralda Valdez, radio operator, calls in air support for a medical evacuation during a Search and Rescue exercise.



Photos by Sgt. Jorge Gomez

Soldiers train carrying a wounded comrade to a Chinook after applying first aid.

Surgeon teaches Honduran air force



Maj. Christopher Fincke, Medical Element flight surgeon, teaches a group of Honduran air force cadets and pilots on the consequences of experiencing vertigo – a dizzy, disorientated state of mind.

By Sgt. Jorge Gomez
Editor

Honduran air force cadets and pilots received a health lecture from the Medical Element flight surgeon July 16.

Maj. Christopher Fincke described the different modes of vision and perception and how to avoid the perils of illusions to his Honduran hosts.

“The presentation gave important information on spatial disorientation and how to prevent that from happening,” said Honduran air force cadet Junior Gonzalez. “What I especially found helpful were his suggestions on improving night vision.”

Gonzalez said this kind of class enriches the knowledge he’s gained as a cadet.

“It’s different when a surgeon discusses these topics because he speaks as an expert on visual health and provides unique insights,” Gonzalez said.

Even for experienced pilots, the class was an important refresher, said Honduran 1st Lt. Jose Garcia.

“In a short period of time, Maj. Fincke gave straightforward information on the most relevant topics,” Garcia said. “It was primarily geared for cadets, but we pilots always need to be reminded of the basics.”



Honduran air force 1st Lt. Jose Garcia prepares Maj. Christopher Fincke for a flight on a T-27 Tucano at Soto Cano Air Base July 16.



Photos by Sgt. Jorge Gomez

Honduran air force cadets and pilots listen attentively to a lecture on visual health given by Medical Element’s flight surgeon.